

How the Image Was Made

Almost Sundown
By Jim Harrison



Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina
One overlook East of Richland Balsam
August 22, 2014

What Was the Photographer Thinking?

- “Wow, I’m seeing something special. How can I capture this?”
- What to include: composition elements
 - Sun as a disk
 - Blue ridges & blue sky on left: complementary colors to sunset and cloud colors
 - Fir trees to frame the sun
 - Colorful clouds pointing to the sun
 - Foreground grass & plants on right to anchor and give the image scale
- What’s the correct exposure?

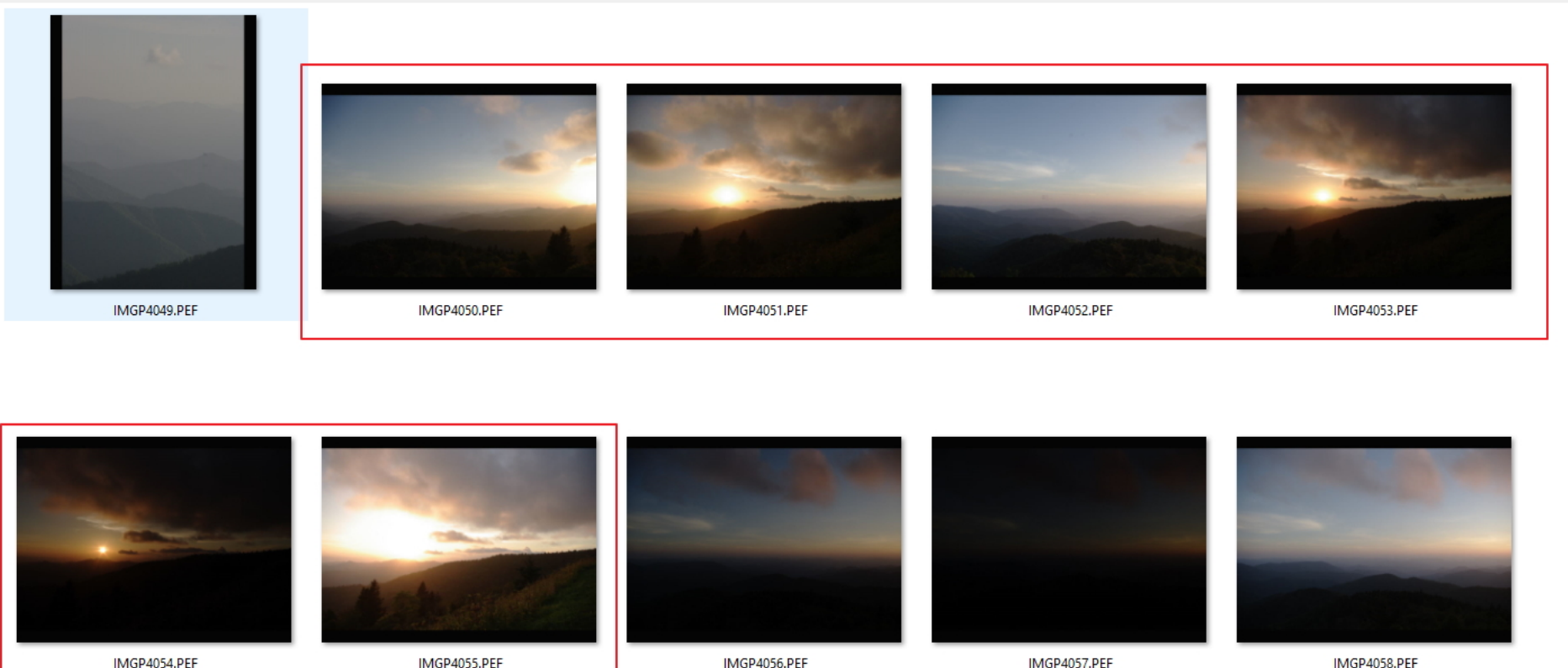
Shooting Approach for “Almost Sundown”

- High Dynamic Range/Panorama (HDR/Pano)
- 4 Images Across/Horizontally (for Pano)
- Each Horizontal Image Composed of Multiple Exposures to Expand Dynamic Range
 - Make test exposures to decide on bracketing for HDR
 - Result
 - Three (3) Images needed
 - +/- 2 stops
- Total of 12 Images

Test Shots to Set Exposure Range

- 6 shots covering desired composition and exposure range – examine histogram

K20D 2014-08-25 Waynesville NC



IMGP4049.PEF

IMGP4050.PEF

IMGP4051.PEF

IMGP4052.PEF

IMGP4053.PEF

IMGP4054.PEF

IMGP4055.PEF

IMGP4056.PEF

IMGP4057.PEF

IMGP4058.PEF

File name:

Files of type: All Image Files

Camera & Settings

- Camera: Pentax K20D: 14 megapixel sensor
- Lens : Pentax 18-55mm (kit lens)
 - Focal Length = 18 mm (~27 mm equivalent)
 - Field of View
 - ~67 degrees horizontal
 - ~45 degrees vertical
- ISO = 100
- F-Stop = f9.0
- Shutter Speed = 1/125
- Bracketing = +/- 2 stops
 - Shutter speeds: 1/500, 1/125, and 1/30

Capture the Images

- Tripod – leveled w/bubble level
- 1/3 overlap between pano frames

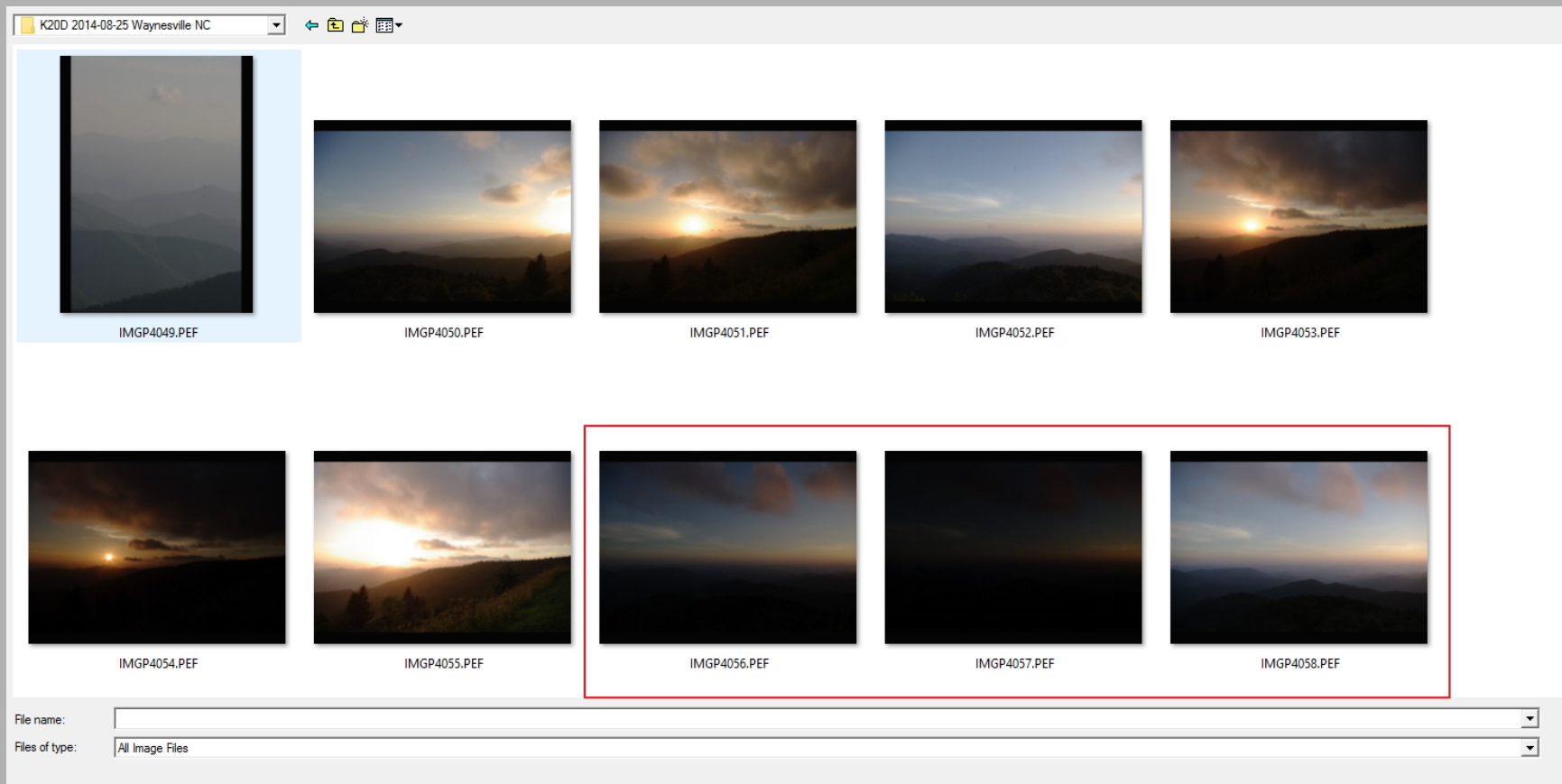
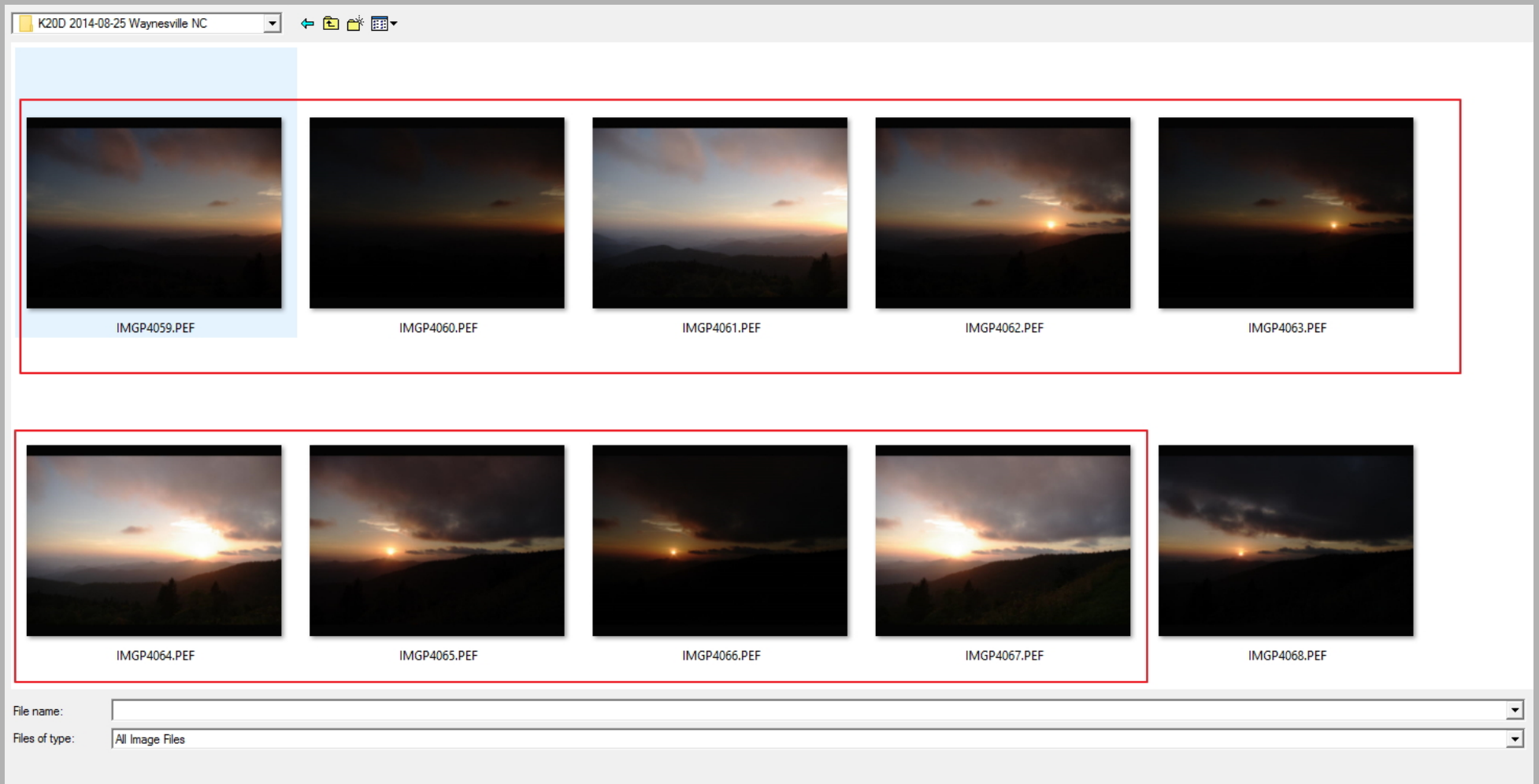


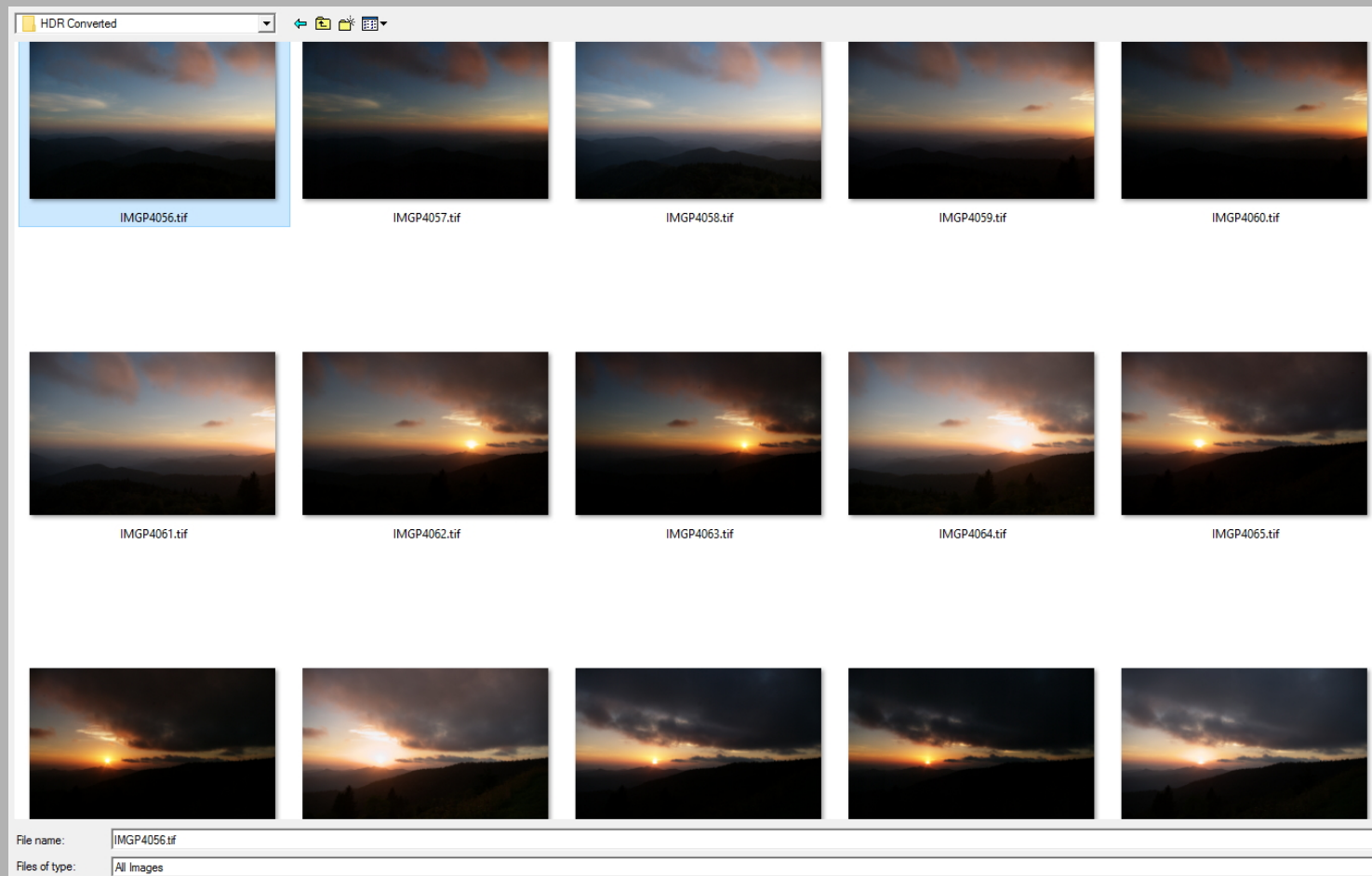
Image Capture (continued)

- RAW format



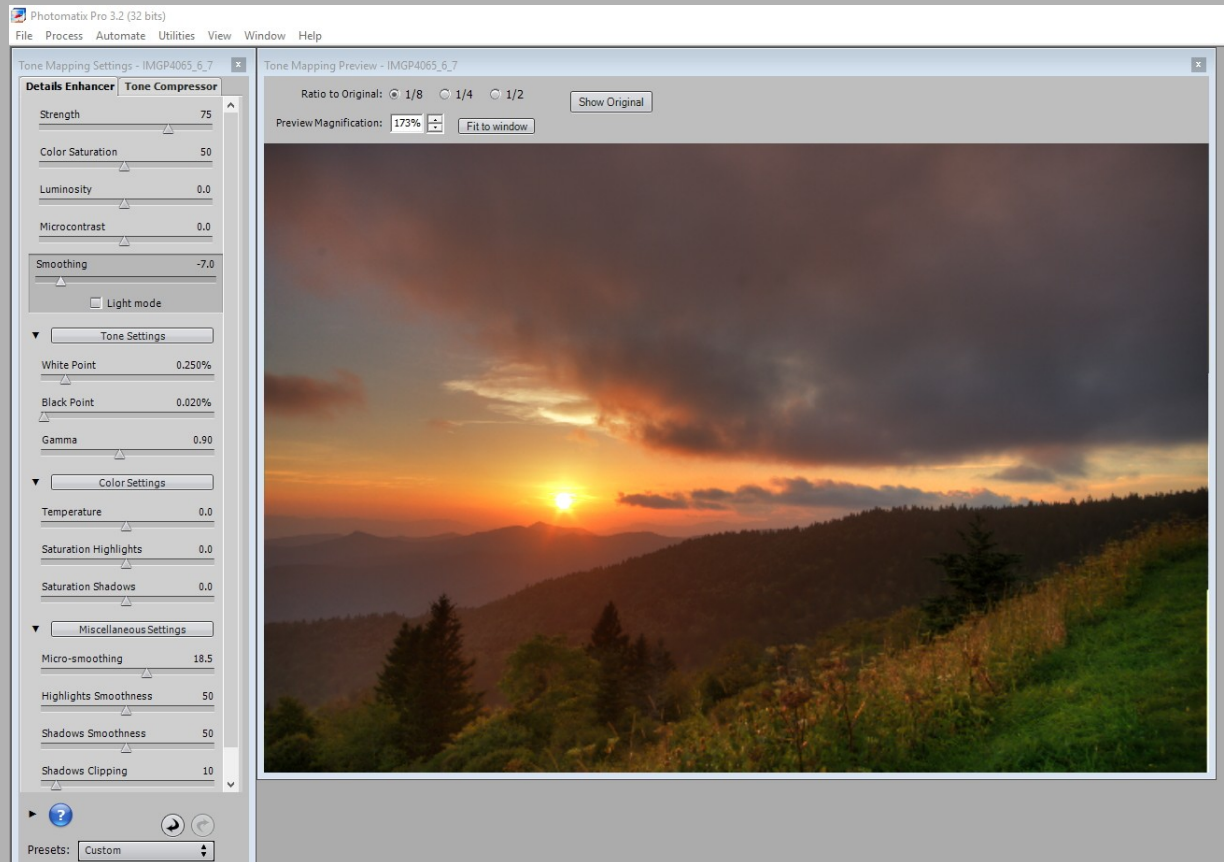
Processing

- RAW to TIFF Conversion
- All frames processed the same (identical!)

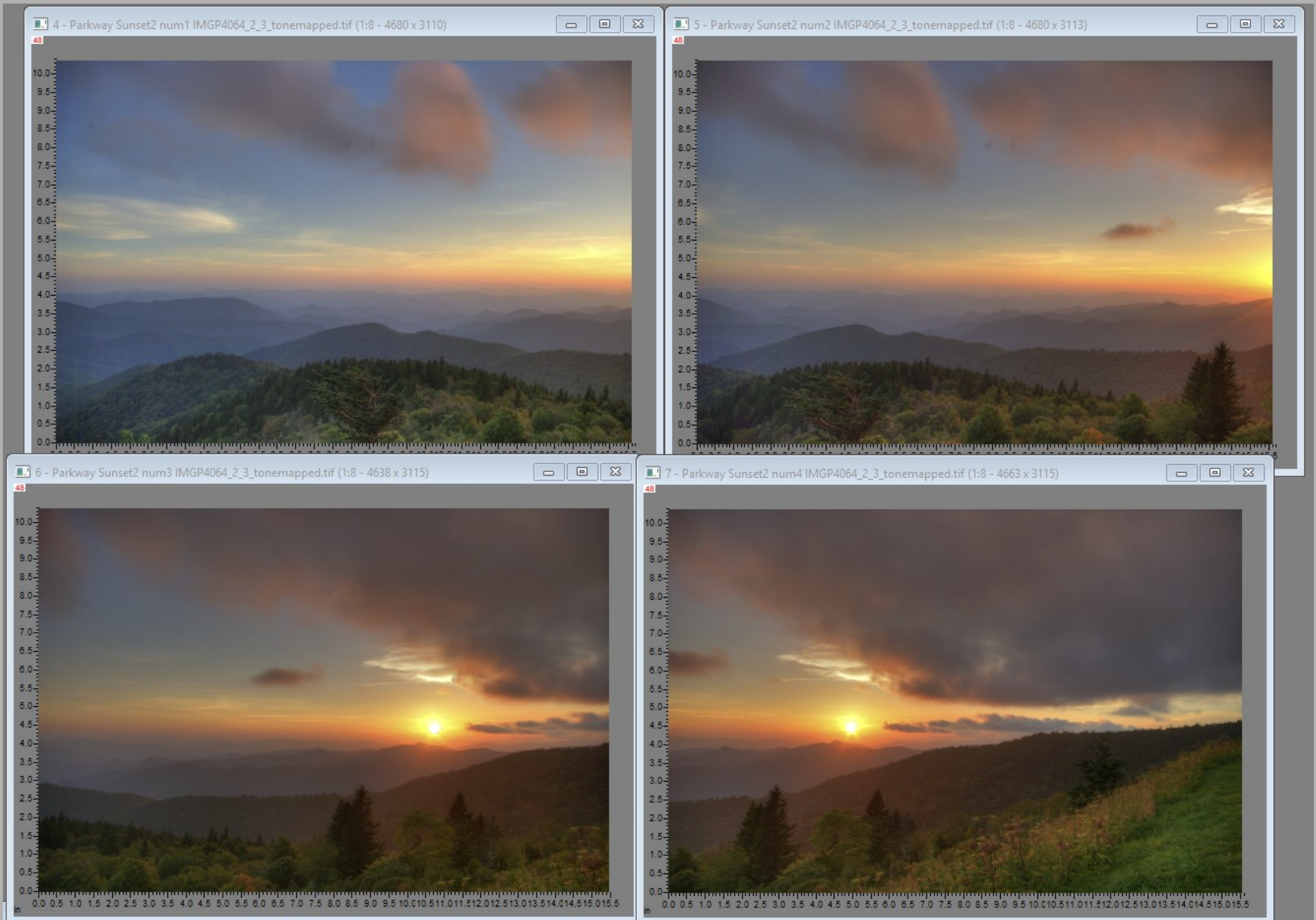


HRD Processing

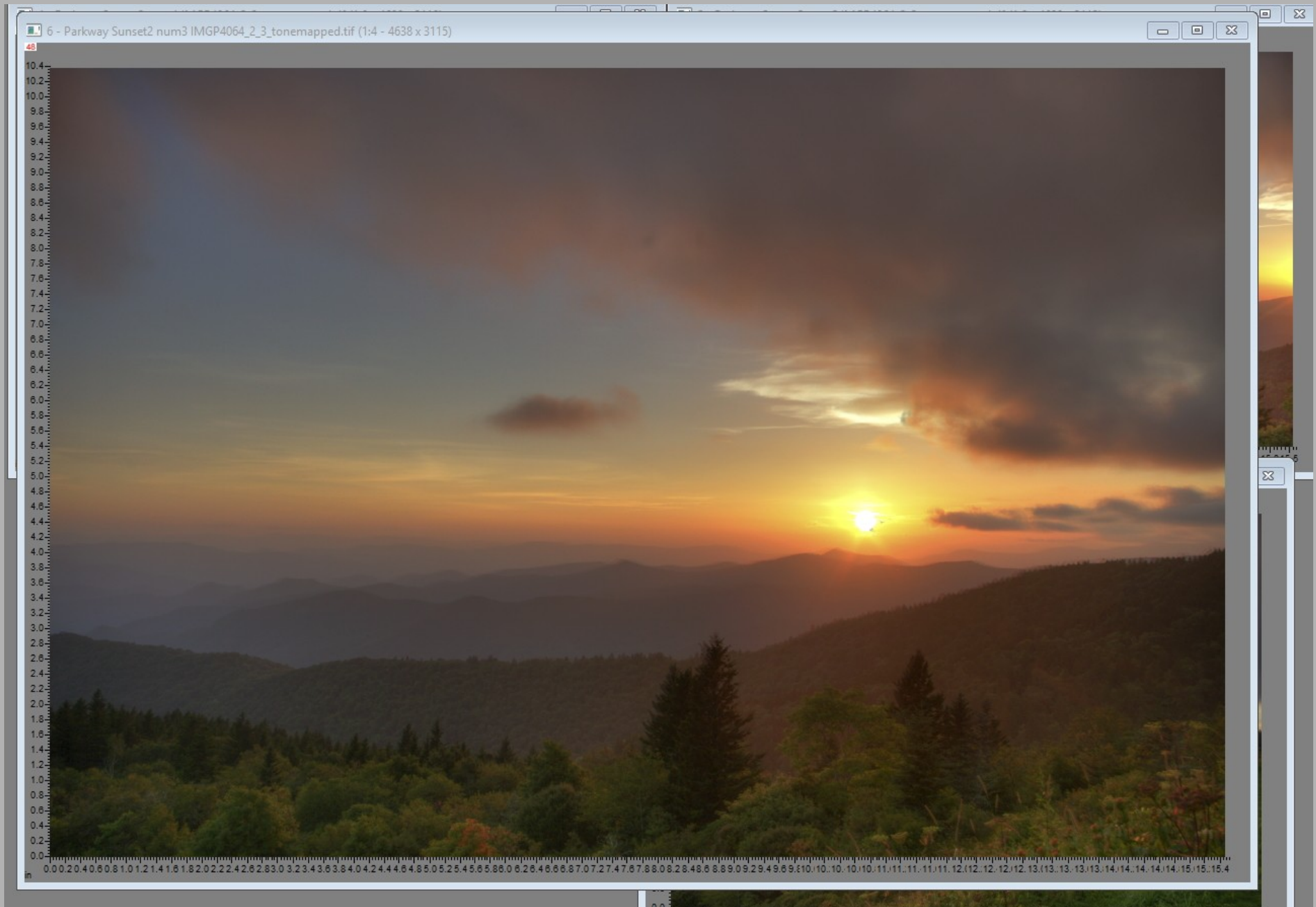
- Tone-mapped Using Photomatix
- Each 3-exposure pano frame processed exactly the same (identical!)



Result – 4 HDR Frames



Examine for Tone-Mapping Artifacts



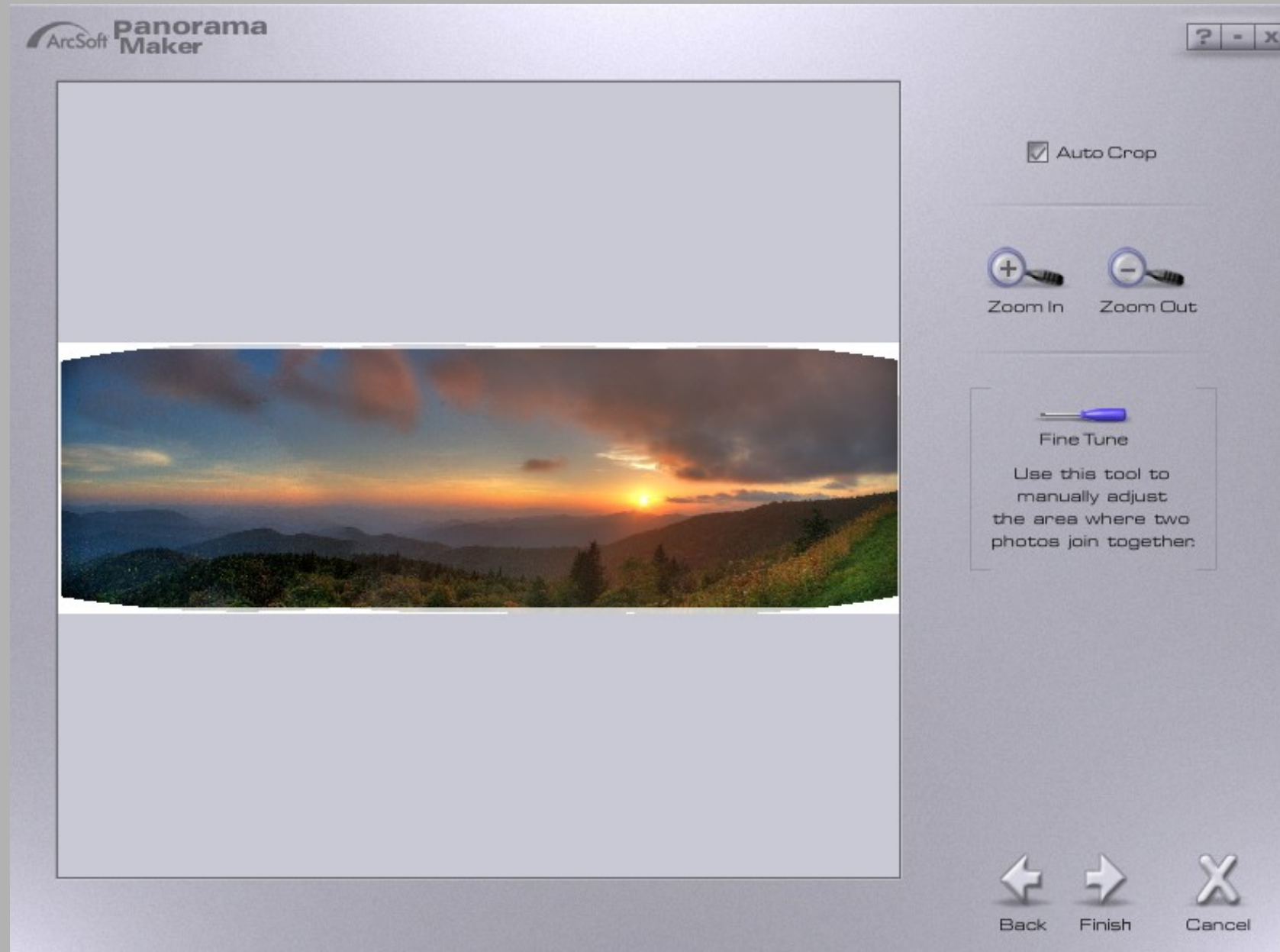
Manually Fix Artifacts



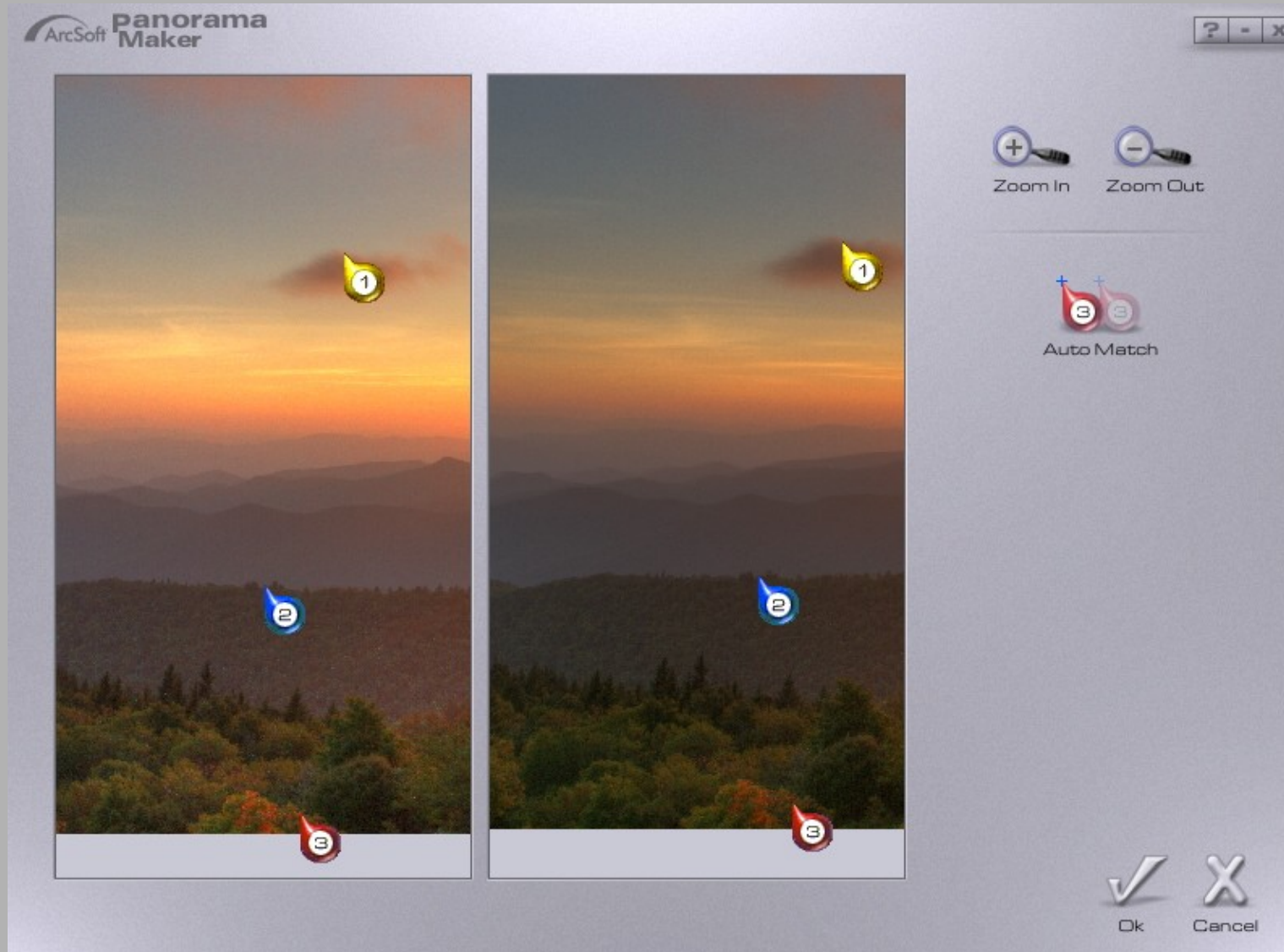
Stitch HDR Frames into a Panorama



Initial Stitch = Fail



Fine Tune Stitching – Select Match Points

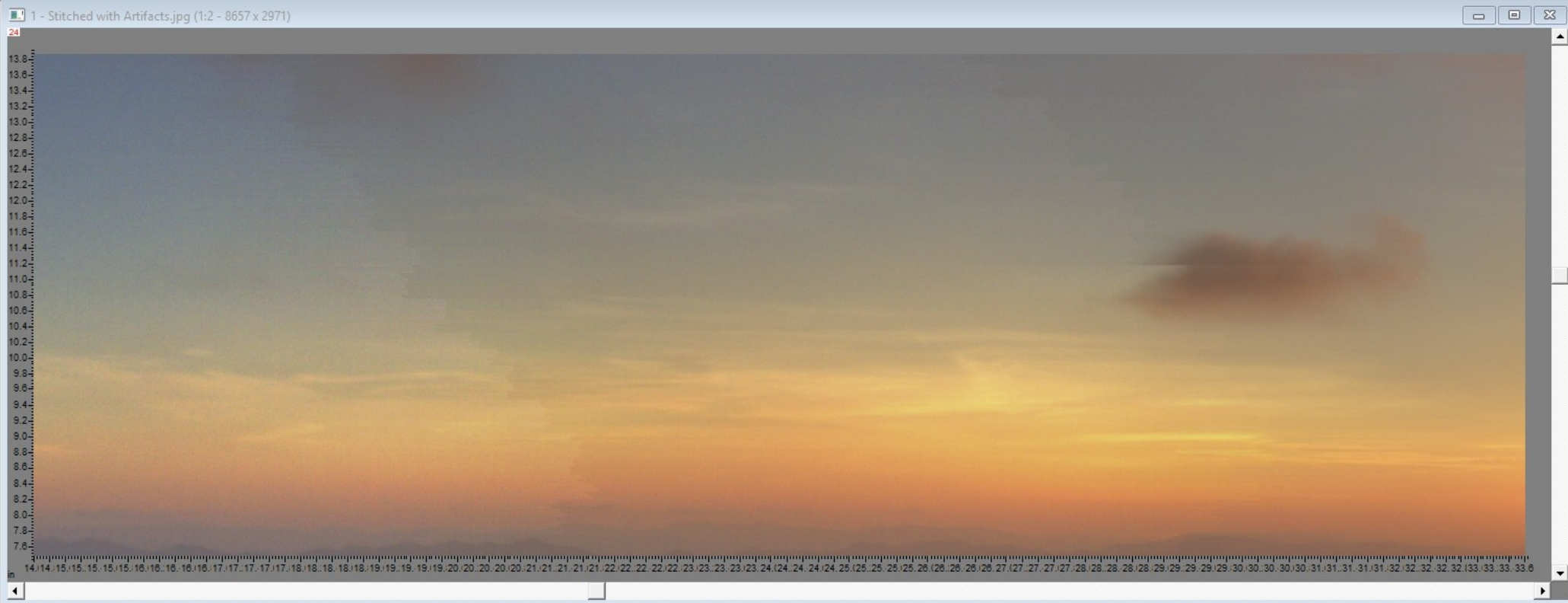


Final Pano Stitch



Examine Image for Stitching Artifacts

- Two Issues
 - Moving Clouds
 - Change in lighting between frames



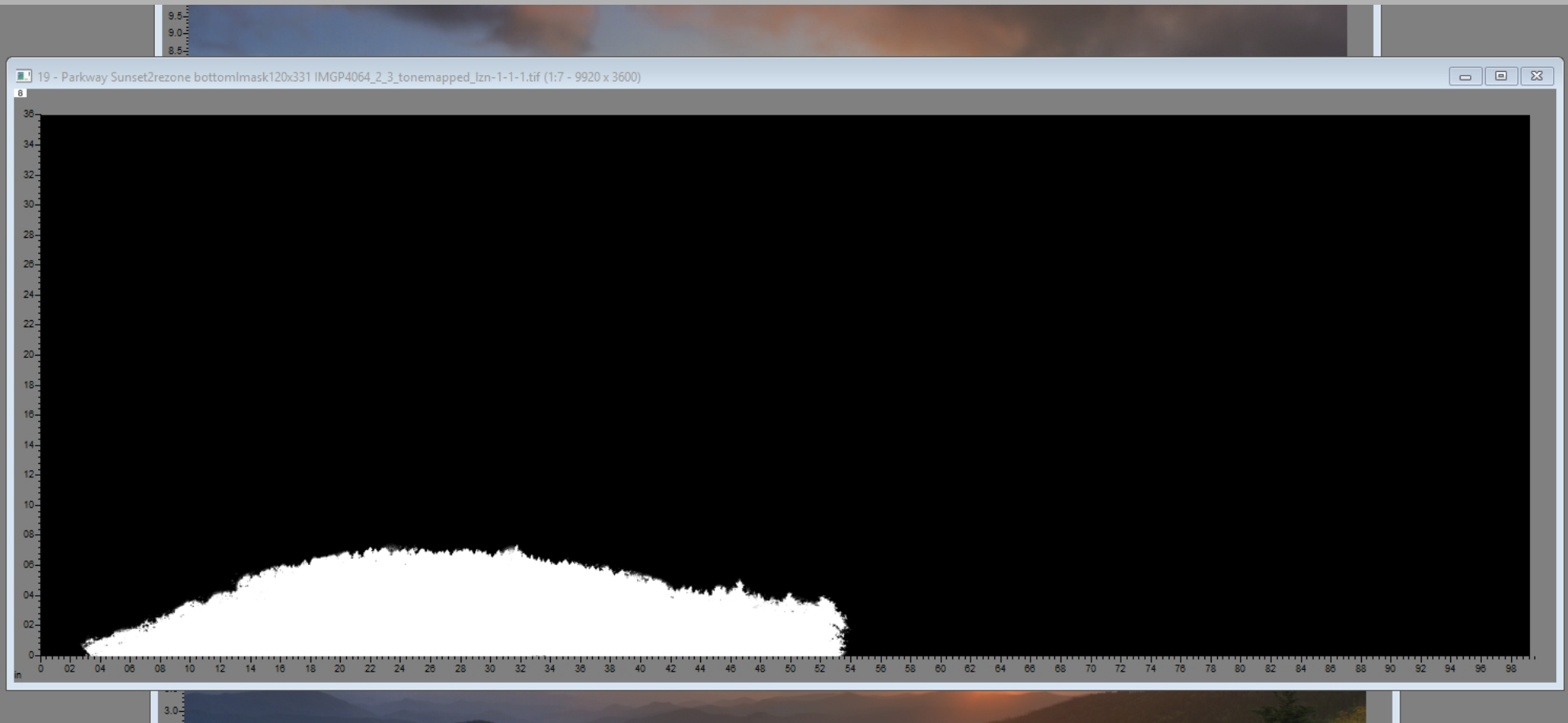
Final Editing

- Manually Fix Stitching Artifacts
- Masks & Local Brightness Curves for Local Contrast Enhancement



Example Mask

- Left Foreground



Before (Bottom) and After (Top) Local Contrast Adjustments



Final Image

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Final Image Stats:
- 12 x 33 inches
- 35.7 megapixels
~ 140 degrees Horizontal FOV